

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 PC-10

OC-06 CCO-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-04 SCCT-02 CU-04 DRC-01

IO-14 /164 W

----- 030219

O R 051513Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3301

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

UNCLAS LA PAZ 3621

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, BL

SUBJECT: NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF MILITARY UPRISING

1. EMBASSY TRANSMITS FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF BRIEF MILITARY UP-
RISING WHICH OCCURED DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS OF JUNE 5. ACCOUNT
IS TAKEN FROM MORNING NEWSPAPER PRESENCIA, AND PROVIDES MOST
COMPLETE DESCRIPTION AVAILABLE TO DATE ON THESE EVENTS.

2. QUOTE: A FEW MINUTES AFTER MIDNIGHT, SIX ARMORED ASSAULT CARS
ENTERED THZ PLAZA MURILLO, FOUR OF WHICH STATIONED THEMSELVES AT
THE CORNERS TO CONTROL THE ENTRANCES TO THE PLAZA AND THE OTHER
TWO IN FRONT OF THE PALACE OF GOVERNMENT. ONE OF THESE TWO
VEHICLES FIRED A GRENADE AT THE PALACE, PRODUCING A DENSE CLOUD
OF SMOKE THAT SPREAD OUT FROM ONE OF THE WINDOWS OF THE CENTRAL
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BALCONY. ARMED CIVILIANS, MEANWHILE, WERE POSTED NEAR THE PALACE

TO DETAIN AND SEARCH ANYONE WHO PASSED THROUGH THE AREA. NEAR THE OFFICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ORDER, A FEW METERS FROM THE PLAZA MURILLO, WELL-ARMED SOLDIERS GUARDED A GROUP OF CIVILIANS WITH THEIR HANDS IN THE AIR.

3. THE FORCES OF THE GOVERNMENT, IN A RAPID REACTION, THROUGHOUT THE CITY, IMMEDIATELY MOBILIZED LAYAL UNITS AND ELEMENTS OF THE PARTIES THAT FORM THE NATIONALIST POPULAR FRONT AND CONCENTRATED IN LOCATIONS PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. AROUND 1:45 P.M., THE ARMORED UNITS THAT HAD ENTERED THE PLAZA MURILLO WITHDREW, TOGETHER WITH OTHER ASSAULT VEHICLES BELONGING TO THE TARAPACA REGIMENT. THE VEHICLES WITHDREW RAPIDLY TO EL ALTO. MEANWHILE, AN ELEMENT OF THE MILITARY POLICE THAT WAS ON GUARD AT THE PALACE TOOK CONTROL OF PLAZA MURILLO AND, A FEW MINUTES LATER, SOLDIERS OF THE COLORADOS REGIMENT IN BATTLE DRESS DESCENDED INTO THE CENTER OF THE CITY TO ESTABLISH CONTROL OF THE SITUATION. TOWARD 2:30 A.M., IT WAS LEARNED THAT CAPTAIN ECHEVERRIA AND OTHER OFFICERS WHOSE NAMES ARE NOT KNOWN TOOK DIPLOMATIC ASYLUM IN THE BRAZILIAN EMBASSY, JUST A BLOCK AND A HALF FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE "LAS RETAMAS," WHICH WAS STRONGLY GUARDED BY SOLDIERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDENT'S SECURITY GUARD WHO STOPPED ALL VEHICLES AND PERSONS IN THE VICINITY TO CHECK IDENTIFICATION AND SEARCH FOR ARMS.

4. AT 2:45 FPN EXECUTIVE SECRETARY JAIME PONCE CABALLERO STATED THAT HE HAD DECREED THE TOTAL MOBILIZATION OF THE SUPRA-PARTY ORGANIZATION, ON A NATIONAL SCALE, TO DEFEND THE GOVERNMENT "AGAINST COMMUNIST EXTREMISM." HE SAID THAT, AT THAT MOMENT, THE AUTHORITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE FPN WERE ENGAGED IN THE TASK OF PERSUADING THE REBELS TO CEASE THEIR ACTIVITIES AND AVOID BLOODSHED. HE STATED THAT IF THIS REQUEST WAS NOT ACCEPTED, THE THREE PARTIES OF THE FPN, IN COMPLETE UNITY, WERE PREPARED TO TAKE PART IN AN ARMED CONFRONTATION.

5. AT FOUR O'CLOCK THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION, GUILLERMO BULACIA, IN A MESSAGE IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNMENT, STATED THAT THE SUBVERSIVE MOVEMENT HAD FAILED AND THAT THE SITUATION WAS UNDER CONTROL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. MEANWHILE, TOWARD FOUR A.M., A STRONGLY-ARMED CONTINGENT OF THE NATIONALIST POPULAR FRONT UNCLASSIFIED

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OCCUPIED SAN ANDRES UNIVERSITY. SEVERAL LEADERS EXPLAINED THAT THE OPERATION WAS INTENDED TO SAVE THE BUILDING FROM THE DANGER OF OCCUPATION BY "EXTREMIST FORCES." THE MEASURE WAS ADOPTED, IN THE CONTEXT OF RECENT EVENTS, TO PREVENT THE UNIVERSITY'S "CONVERSION INTO A CENTER OF SUBVERSION", ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF THE FPN.

6. THE FORCES OF THE TARAPACA REGIMENT, IN THEIR RETREAT TO EL

ALTO, THREATENED THE MILITARY AIR BASE. FORTUNATELY, NO HOSTILITIES RESULTED, INSTEAD OF WHICH A DIALOGUE TOOK PLACE BETWEEN BESIEGERS AND BESIEGED. LATER, THE TARAPACA RETIRED TO ITS BASE. APPARENTLY, THIS UNIT WAS LEFT WITHOUT COMMANDERS UPON THE DEPARTURE OF SOME OF ITS OFFICERS TO SEEK DIPLOMATIC ASYLUM.

7. MEANWHILE, PRESIDENT HUGO BANZER SUAREZ WAS INFORMED BY TELEPHONE ABOUT THE EVENTS OCCURING IN LA PAZ. YESTERDAY MORNING HE HAD TRAVELED WITH MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS GERMAN AZCARRAGA TO THE CITY OF TUPIZA. THIS MORNING HE WAS SCHEDULED TO FLY TO SUCRE TO ATTEND THE FUNERAL OF EX-PRESIDENT MAMERTO URRIOLAGOITIA.

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